

**REMARKS**

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-15, 17, and 18. Applicant amends claims 1, 10, 15, and 18. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-15, 17, and 18 are pending.

The rejections are respectfully traversed below, and reconsideration of all rejected claims is respectfully requested.

**Rejection of Claim 18 Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph**

The Office Action rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph because claim 18 includes a term having insufficient antecedent basis. Applicants amend claim 18 to obviate this rejection.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is respectfully requested.

**Rejection of Claims 1, 3-15, 17 and 18 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 3-15, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,392,977 to Ando et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Ando") in view of U.S. Patent 5,659,531 to Ono et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Ono"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In item 7, with respect to Ando, the Office Action asserts, "Referring now to Figure 1, the claimed "optical axis" is read by the Examiner to correspond to the path of the light beam starting from the coating 4a of the beam splitter 4 and ending at the recording medium." However, Ando does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "the optical axis of the first light beam is parallel to the optical axis of the second light beam before the first and second light beams are reflected by the beam splitter," as recited in claims 1 and 15.

Instead, Ando discloses, "The first semiconductor laser 3a and the second semiconductor laser 3b are arranged so that optical axes of the first and second light beams L1, L2 will cross each other," (column 4, lines 62-65).

Because first and second light beams L1, L2 of Ando cross each other, first light beam L1 cannot have an optical axis which is parallel to the optical axis of the second light beam L2. As shown in Figure 1, it appears that the light sources 3A, 3B are producing light beams L1, L2, which are perpendicular to each other.

Moreover, Ono does not cure the deficiencies of Ando. Instead, Figure 11 of Ono shows three light sources 210, 230 and 231 whose light beams also cross each other. Thus, as neither reference discloses or suggested at least this claimed feature, it is further submitted that as a whole the references similarly would fail to disclose or suggest the same.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Ando and Ono, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach or suggest at least, "wherein the optical axis of the first light beam is parallel to the optical axis of the second light beam before the first and second light beams are reflected by the beam splitter and after the first and second light beams are reflected by the beam splitter," as recited in claims 1 and 15. Therefore, for at least these reasons claims 1 and 15 patentably distinguishes from the cited references.

Claims 3-9, 17, and 18 depend from claims 1 or 15 and include all of the features of their respective base claims plus additional features which are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Therefore, for at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 3-9, 17, and 18 also patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Similarly, it is respectfully submitted that Ando and Ono, taken separately or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest at least, "wherein the optical axis of the emitted light beam is parallel to the optical axis of a second light beam from the other light source before the emitted light beam and the second light beam are reflected by the beam splitter and after the emitted light beam and second light beam are reflected by the beam splitter," as recited in claim 10.

Claims 11-14 depend from claim 10 and include all of the features of claim 10 plus additional features which are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Therefore, for at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11-14 also patentably distinguish over the cited references.

#### Summary

Claims 1, 3-15, 17, and 18 are pending and under consideration. It is respectfully submitted that none of the references taken separately or in combination disclose the present claimed invention.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested

to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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